

Media Release

22 July 2010

TASMANIA SNUBS HOME-GROWN DOCTORS

As many as 34 Tasmanian-trained medical students have missed out on internships in Tasmanian hospitals, despite a pledge from Tasmania's Premier that 'if there are domestically trained medical graduates and they want a job in a Tasmanian hospital as a trainee doctor they will have it'.

President of the Australian Medical Students' Association Ross Roberts-Thomson said that in the end, it is the people of Tasmania that will miss out.

"Despite the nation-wide doctor shortage, Tasmanians are set to miss out on locally trained doctors because there are insufficient internships on offer in the Tasmanian health system.

"Completing a supervised internship is an essential component of medical training in Australia. Without an internship, graduating medical students are unable to gain full registration and work in the community. These students, who want to work in Tasmania, will now have to try and find internships interstate or look for employment in non-medical vocations," he said.

"It is a huge investment putting a medical student through five to six years of medical school, and to have these graduates not actually practice medicine flies in the face of community expectations.

"AMSA believes that each state in Australia has the responsibility to provide internship training for all of their medical graduates. We have seen a significant increase in medical student numbers over the past six years, and the pressure for internships in many mainland states is now very high. If, like Tasmania, each state produces more medical graduates than it has internships, we are going to have a nation-wide excess of doctors - and in that scenario everyone loses," said Mr Roberts-Thomson.

AMSA calls on the Tasmanian Government to honour its pledge to provide internships for locally trained medical graduates and for the University of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Government to work together to ensure that Tasmania is training a sustainable number of medical students.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Sam Kirchner
0415 680 763
publicrelations@amsa.org.au